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ABSTRACT

Fundamental adjustments in the educational philosophy and practices of private junior colleges are essential to their survival. There is a great need for public awareness of the private junior college's economic plight, which is due to rising costs and non-competitive prices for students and salaries for faculty. A major purpose of this monograph is to see how the private purposes of private junior colleges are relevant to contemporary public policies in junior college education. The private junior college, being a relatively free agent, is suited to the role of a prototype for the future 2-year college; however, the concepts of equal opportunity, accountability, and individualized instruction must be incorporated into its institutional style. The case study of Mitchell College (North Carolina) shows how the cooperative efforts of trustees, administration, and faculty succeeded in redirecting the purposes and style of a private junior college. It was found that (1) a junior college must be oriented to the needs of the public interest; and (2) individual institutions need local and national organizations to promote and protect their interests. (CA)

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THE PRIVATE JUNIOR COLLEGE
Prospects for the 70's

The Mitchell College Story

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Introduction

As American higher education enters the 1970's, the private junior college faces an uncertain, even conjectural, future. Economically, its survival as a viable financial enterprise is in doubt. Educationally, sweeping changes in traditional academic concepts and values threaten its conventional programs and practices with obsolescence.

The major purpose of this monograph is to examine in broad outline the new perspectives in junior college education that have placed the private two-year institution in such a precarious, if not fatal, position; and, to argue that fundamental adjustments in the educational philosophy and practices of the typical independent junior college are essential to its survival. The views expressed here are based largely on the authors' experience in dealing with junior college trends, not only in a research and development context, but from the hard realities of a campus environment. Chapter III presents a case history of the issues in terms of the gradual transformation of a small church-related institution. As will be seen, the prime ingredients of renewed institutional viability and broader support are problem-oriented policies and programs that serve, not an abstractly conceived mission, but the measurable needs and expectations of identifiable public constituencies.

The Economic Dilemma

Underlying the need for explicit definition of a more effective educational role for the private junior college is the need for broad public awareness of its economic plight. In this respect, the private junior college is not materially different from its sometimes more prestigious and affluent counterpart, the private senior college or university. Private institutions face a common problem of economic survival, generated in part by inflation, and complicated by tax-subsidized competition from burgeoning statewide systems of public universities, multi-purpose senior colleges, and comprehensive community colleges.

The facts which define this seemingly insoluble fiscal dilemma are not difficult to identify. On the one hand, educational costs are rising for all colleges, but income-producing enrollments for the private college are leveling off or declining, and gifts or grants are not taking up the slack. The prevailing evidence suggests that the typical private institution has just about priced itself out of the market: more and more such institutions report they cannot recruit enough students at going rates to fill their classrooms and dormitories. Mounting budgetary deficits have caused some institutions to quietly close their doors, driven others into public ownership, and threaten still others with creeping insolvency.

These elementary fiscal difficulties do not readily yield to classic economic solutions, such as raising fees to offset increased costs. The fee structure of the typical private junior college is at or beyond the point of diminishing returns. Where is the typical junior college student who is willing

to pay anywhere from $1500 to $3000 a year for the kind of academic program he can get elsewhere for a fraction of the cost? Obviously, he has just about disappeared. The overwhelming majority of junior college students are at neighborhood community colleges, where the costs they would otherwise pay for their education are being subsidized by the public at large. Increased fees for increased costs at the private junior college only means fewer students and larger deficits.

While the private sector of higher education, as a whole, is seriously affected by the growing availability of public higher education at noncompetitive prices, the financial plight of the private junior college seems especially desperate. Most such institutions have nowhere to turn for relief from a merciless squeeze between rising costs and noncompetitive prices. Private benefactors of the junior college are not especially noted for their numbers or their affluence. For the most part, the private junior college lives a kind of hand-to-mouth existence, all the more so in view of the current stagnation in the private economy.

What can be done to correct the fundamental inequities and insufficiences which, economically speaking, may be on the verge of driving the private junior college out of business? There is no easy answer. As one of the academic exemplars of private enterprise, the tuition-financed junior college once operated in an economically competitive market. Yet such a market no longer exists, nor is it likely to return. Public policy has decreed that access to low-cost junior college education should be extended to all citizens; and the consequent growth of the low-tuition, open-door community college has been one of the great social advances in the nation's educational history. But maintenance of nearly universal opportunity depends largely on massive tax subsidies for public institutions. On the whole, this kind of support is not available to private institutions, at least not to the same degree. It would appear, therefore, that the competitive gap between the public and private sectors of junior college education cannot be closed.

Is There a Way Out?

If there is an answer to this dilemma, it seems to lie somewhere in an accommodation between public policies and private purposes in junior college education. The impact of emerging public policy is such that higher education, and especially junior college education, is now a public enterprise. As a result, public institutions are well on their way to establishing an effective monopoly in higher education, even though many private institutions of higher learning—including some junior colleges—are also essentially public service institutions. If private junior colleges are to survive, some way must be found to compensate them for services rendered in the public interest, which private financing can no longer wholly support in a noncompetitive market.

In recent years, a number of state and federal programs have emerged which aim in the general direction of this problem. The more promising programs fall into two general categories, namely, student aid and categorical program grants; a third, roughly designated as service contracts, is at the moment something of a dark horse.

Student aid in the form of general scholarships, tuition equalization, and opportunity grants have the potential for equalizing competition between public and private institutions in the student market. Categorical grants and service contracts can help to balance institutional operating budgets, and to generate financial margins for new educational developments. They could also be used to expand public services at private institutions for less than the cost of similar programs in fully-subsidized public institutions.

For many private institutions, however, these programs in their present form comprise little more than stop-gap measures and, in some instances, can actually aggravate financial difficulties. And for others, including most private junior colleges, their impact in fact appears to be negligible. Moreover, their legal and political implications are currently fraught with controversial uncertainties; and the administrative machinery does not exist which could assure equitable and effective management on a scale commensurate with the magnitude of needs.

The major thrust of this monograph, however, is not to propose technical solutions to detailed fiscal, legal, or administrative problems. Suffice it to say that the solutions to these problems are available *provided that* public policy defines the approach as an acceptable alternative to what appears to be an inevitable collapse of junior college education in the private sector.

A New Accommodation

In this respect, it *is* the major purpose of this monograph to ask a far more fundamental question of private junior colleges themselves: in what specific ways are the private purposes of the private junior college relevant to contemporary public policies in junior college education? Responsive answers to this question are, in effect, the other side of the public/private accommodation coin. Indeed, to expect public policies to accommodate private purposes without such answers is to put the cart before the horse. Private junior colleges cannot expect public sympathy for their economic plight unless they are willing to commit themselves, in explicit ways, to meeting public needs.

Alternative answers to the question will vary in propriety and practicability. For example, it is estimated that 60 percent of the nation's private junior colleges have denominational ties, some fairly intimate, others comparatively remote. As a general rule, where the educational goals of church-related institutions are inseparable from their sectarian commitments, the

colleges would have special difficulties in identifying with public purposes in junior college education. On the other hand, private institutions with only nominal church sponsorship, and those with none at all, are for the most part quite evidently serving a secular need in the secular society. In principle, their qualifications for public subsidies could be no less persuasive than those of institutions wholly within the public domain.

A second possibility exists in terms of simple quantitative needs, such as readier access to junior college education in geographical areas that have no public facilities. As public systems expand, of course, this need is rapidly diminishing. Yet there still exist areas of relatively high population densities for which public facilities for junior college education are inadequate or nonexistent, where the use of existing private institutions could offer, at the very least, an interim solution. In some instances, individual private institutions might enter into contractual arrangements with state and local governments to provide partially subsidized programs and services that otherwise would require full-cost tax investments in duplicative physical plants, and administrative and teaching staffs. On the whole, this approach does not offer a significant answer to the future of the private junior college. It would, in fact, be limited to those few institutions which, by reason of historical accident are well situated and are, moreover, legally eligible for, as well as explicitly committed to, such an arrangement.

If the private junior college has a significant role to play in the future, this role lies more clearly in the qualitative dimensions of higher education than in the quantitative ones. The scope and impact of higher education's role in society has radically changed in a few short years from the traditional ivory-towered center for the preservation of culture and the advancement of learning which catered primarily to a comparatively elite group, to that of an integral component in the complex social and economic mechanisms of today's world. Much of this shifting emphasis in higher education accounts for the resurgence of junior college education on a national scale. The private junior college could help to alleviate the problems generated by this upheaval, but not without radical changes in its prevailing goals.

Unlike the senior college or university, the driving social and economic forces behind the full scale blossoming of contemporary junior colleges are almost wholly pragmatic. In its earlier manifestations, the junior college was conceived as kind of an extension of the high school, primarily to relieve the university of mounting responsibilities for the lower division curriculum.[1] Throughout most of its history the private junior college has most especially played this limited role, typically for a marginal, yet relatively select, group of students with college-level aspirations. Today, however, this role is no longer pragmatically effective. It is, in fact, an anachronism.

Whether the reason is economic, educational, or both, the evidence is dramatic that the private junior college is not now performing a significant social function in America. Junior college education itself has mushroomed in the past ten years, with enrollments nearly tripling. The number of private junior colleges, however, has actually declined whereas the number of public ones has just about doubled. In 1961, 26 percent of the national junior college enrollment was in private institutions. Today, the proportion is about seven percent.[2]

Though these numerical trends might seem to confirm a gloomy fate for the private junior college, they actually provide a clue to an effective role for this type of institution. It is conceded, for example, that much of the inner turmoil in higher education today is a concomitant of oversized institutional enrollments that lead to a depersonalization of the educational process. It is also conceded that higher education—particularly at the junior college level—must become progressively more individualized if the needs and aspirations of an increasingly heterogeneous student population are to be accommodated under the concept of equal educational opportunity.

The inherent problems of these conflicting pressures fall heaviest on public institutions, particularly on the public junior college. This institution, more than any other, is charged with satisfying the more urgent higher educational demands of contemporary American society, for example: second chance opportunities for the low achiever; responsive educational styles for the alienated, the underprivileged and the deprived; mid-level occupational training for an increasingly technological economy; and a general cultural resource for the local community. Though it is clear that the public junior college has accepted the challenge of doing all these things, it is far from certain at the moment that it has developed the academic expertise to accomplish its most important objective: to provide truly equal opportunity for the vast number of nontraditional students which conventional values and practices in higher education have essentially rejected in terms of traditional notions of "college material."

It is in this area of equal opportunity that the private junior college could develop its most viable role as a quasi-public institution serving wholly public purposes. In particular, there is a clear need for a pioneering type of junior college institution. By innovative example, such an institution could accelerate the transformation of traditional concepts in junior college education into genuine educational opportunities which accommodate contemporary educational needs of the nontraditional student. Pioneering of this sort, indeed, requires precisely the kind of field laboratory which the private junior college could become. It is unencumbered by large quantitative demands for its services which tend to preempt the energies of college educators. It is relatively free of organizational constraints

that tend to inhibit experimentation and change. For it is, after all, an academic institution with solid credentials for performing academic functions.

What is being suggested here, in short, is that private junior colleges seeking justification for their survival have a ready-made opportunity at hand, requiring first of all a clear commitment to the challenge. What is discussed in the following chapters of this monograph is, in essence, how such commitments can be implemented.

The Key to Equal Opportunity

The contemporary junior college is a unique American institution that evolved from 19th Century educational innovations. Sometimes called "democracy's college," the two-year institution is not a subordinate form of classical higher education. Its reason to exist originated in, and continues to hinge upon, societal demands to fulfill broad educational needs ignored by narrowly oriented traditional institutions.

The two-year college movement is marked by a positive philosophy, a social thrust, and a practical style. It is committed to the ideals that universal higher education rightfully should be available to anyone who can profit from it, and that educational accessibility should be extended to all people through "open door" admissions. Two-year colleges, situated within commuting distance of potential students, charging modest fees, and practicing honest open admissions policies, are in a unique position to answer demands for greater educational opportunity by removing barriers to education. Their role in advancing the civic competence of citizens is vital to the nation's political, social, economic, and cultural welfare.

Modern society daily grows more technological and complex while demands for trained manpower become ever more insistent. Although the need for unskilled workers is less and less important, the nation has become so highly developed that it cannot afford to waste human resources. Post-secondary education for heterogenous masses of the population is a pressing national need that cannot be met by increasingly selective and elitest-oriented senior colleges and universities. "Democracy's college" is once again called to perform its familiar role of meeting societal demands for greater educational opportunity for all citizens.

Although junior colleges enjoy a unique potential capability for responding to national education needs, their performance to date falls far short of expectations. Equal opportunity in the junior college still means the least to those for whom it should mean the most. Under an open door policy any person who graduated from high school, or is at least eighteen years of age, and seemingly capable of benefiting from instruction, is eligible for admission. The resultant student body is often an extremely diverse group drawn largely from the lower two-thirds of the socio-economic spectrum. Many students are disadvantaged to the degree that their backgrounds have failed to provide cultural and educational experiences generally found in the young people that colleges are accustomed to teaching. A significant percentage of disadvantaged, low-aptitude students in a student body creates problems that may require drastic modifications in traditional instructional techniques and curricula.

Faced with these problems, very few junior colleges have been faithful to the promise of the open door. Typical attrition rates are alarming. Annual drop-out percentages in urban institutions now exceed 50 percent,[3] and as many as 75 percent of low achieving students may withdraw during

their first year.[4] Remedial courses often are haphazardly designed and poorly taught by inexperienced instructors, and seldom evaluated carefully. The flagrant deficiencies of many junior college programs are particularly disturbing when they are viewed as dishonorable failures to fulfill the promises implicit in the open door. Attrition rates are not sterile statistics. They reflect the extinguished hopes of disadvantaged young people who believed that the open door offered them a chance.

Educational concepts and values change with glacial slowness in institutions of higher learning. The paucity of effective community college programs should inspire responsible educators to seek new approaches geared to individual learning and learning deficiencies. Yet, a national survey of community colleges disclosed the lamentable fact that, although 91 percent of the institutions polled advocated the concept of the open door, only 55 percent provided programs appropriate for nontraditional students.[5]

Junior college faculties persist in teaching the traditional way, even though student bodies are increasingly nontraditional. They judge academic performance by antiquated methods, such as norm-referenced testing and curve-based grading, despite the fact that these traditional standards assume from the start that all will not succeed.[6]

Faculty members in junior colleges are seldom prepared to teach in accordance with the unique philosophy of that institution. They characteristically are narrowly oriented, academically inclined, subject matter specialists who think in terms of their own graduate school experience. Many cherish status-oriented roles, and prefer dispensing specialized wisdom to advanced students than to teaching remedial courses to ignorant, culturally deprived, and poverty-stricken youth. Some may not agree with the philosophy or the admissions policy of the two-year community college movement. These misplaced faculty members fail to understand that "an instructor is worth only as much as he contributes to the purposes of the institution." [7]

Similarly, junior college administrators and trustees have difficulty in perceiving and relating to student and community needs in substantive ways. Drastic changes in the attitudes of instructors, administrators, and governance officials are required if the open door is to become a fact rather than a slogan.

Faculty members and administrators must work together to change their institutions into places where learning happens. Some experimentation and innovation has been evident but it has never been commensurate with the magnitude of the problem. Research has shown that specifying learning objectives in precise terms and using well organized, self-paced instructional sequences to reach those objectives can guarantee learning for up to 90 percent of all students.[8]

Junior college instructors can be taught to become effective teachers and they should specialize in instructional processes. By working towards equality of educational results they can fulfill the unique promise of the open door.

Thus, as noted in Chapter I, there is need for a pioneering type of junior college institution which, by example and experience, can accelerate the transformation of two-year college education into educational opportunities that accommodate contemporary student demands. The independent junior college, seeking justification for its survival and being a relatively "free agent" in the contemporary educational scene, is ideally suited to the role of the prototype for future two-year colleges. The following sections of this chapter deal with the concepts such a prototype must incorporate in its institutional style.

Accountability

Equal opportunity, considered in terms of good intentions, is a noble concept. Unfortunately, it is too often viewed by those who need it most as a dreary platitude, or even as a downright sham, because they judge it by the harsh reality of results. How can equal opportunity possibly be realized educationally by exposing students from widely disparate cultural and socio-economic backgrounds to identical schooling?

Equal opportunity in education can be obtained only by achieving equity of results. Each student has to be viewed as a unique individual and must be accepted at whatever academic level he may have reached. He then requires individual attention, rather than common exposure, if he is ever to have an equal opportunity to attain specified educational results.

Educators typically concentrate on the inputs and good intentions of their programs while professing an apparently vague concern about the outputs. Curiously, they do not consider their viewpoint irrelevant and suggest that because outputs are difficult to evaluate, it is better to concentrate on inputs (money, classrooms, teachers) that can be quantified precisely. How many of these educators in strange terrain would trust a guide who did not know exactly where he wanted to go and always walked backward looking only at where he had been?

Some of the results of education may be difficult to evaluate precisely but that does not excuse a propensity for ignoring others that can be assessed to an acceptable degree of accuracy. There is really only one critical measure of educational effectiveness and that is student learning! Any attempt to focus on that overwhelmingly important output would be a giant step towards solving the crucial problems of American education. The fact that equal opportunity can be judged only by results implies that educational institutions must be held accountable and evaluated by how well they perform in causing equality of student learning, rather than by what they promise to do and by how they use their resources.

Accountability aims directly at the outputs rather than the inputs of an education system. Educational institutions exist to cause learning. Equal opportunity is fundamentally a commitment to equity of results in terms of measurable student learning according to individual capabilities and interests. This implies that junior college faculties must be held accountable for individually prescribed and measured student learning. The primary function of a junior college instructor is to teach. He must be committed to that role and specialize in instructional processes.[9]

Learning is the only cogent indication of teaching and can be construed further as a change in behavior. Instructional accountability is based on specifically defined objectives, measurement techniques that determine precisely what the teacher intends to accomplish, and instructional systems that assure most students will achieve the objectives. When specific objectives are established, teachers can be held accountable for students who are able to show learning by functioning in ways that were not possible before teaching took place. The promise of the open door will never be realized until teachers accept the professional responsibility of becoming accountable for students. Teachers are the key element in the success of junior college programs.[10]

Concepts of accountability and equal opportunity transcend the necessity for achieving equity of instructional results in classroom settings. There are other significant obstacles to the aspirations of nontraditional students. Some of the officials at the August, 1970 meeting of the American Council on Education in St. Louis expressed the viewpoint that open admission policies could mean that "colleges may soon be overwhelmed with the wrong kind of students."[11] Should students who need education desperately be labeled "the wrong kind" simply because they are academically deficient and nontraditional?

Self-serving, elitest attitudes do not belong in a junior college movement that has been blessed with a democratic heritage expressed in the philosophy of the open door. Rather than seeking ways to bar alienated and deprived young people from a chance to become productive members of society, junior colleges should be conceiving more imaginative programs to recruit, counsel, and extend educational opportunity to all citizens. Even if geographic and financial barriers to postsecondary education could be eliminated, racial minorities, women, and children from lower socio-economic classes would still be represented poorly.[12] These groups contain essential human talents even though as potential students they may be poorly motivated. Active efforts are necessary to seek, enroll, and retain every possible student in the community if the two-year college movement is to extend greater educational opportunity to all citizens. Otherwise educational opportunity will continue to be limited to that class of students to whom higher education is a normal part of growing up.

The junior college is a multi-phase institution with a unique potential for meeting the needs of nontraditional students but it can never be successful unless the faculty, administrators, and governing officials agree with and implement stated institutional goals and objectives. The ideals of accountability and equal opportunity require drastic changes in traditional educational attitudes. The faculty may be the key element in effectuating change but teachers cannot be held accountable unless the total institution is dedicated to that end. A sincere endorsement of accountability must pervade all sectors of the college.

Thus, while accountability is in one sense a primary responsibility of the junior college teacher, in another sense the total institution is involved. Trustees and administrators must become educational leaders, not only by establishing policies and procedures which encourage and reward successful teachers, but by creating a climate where all college members are willing to be accountable. In a general sense, accountability means that boards of trustees, presidents, administrators, and teachers will be held responsible for the performance of their students.[13]

The college leadership must take upon itself responsibility for establishing institutional styles that make the college accountable internally to the students from the community. Students should be able to enter the college, find a program that is consistent with their needs, remain in college until the goal is reached, and then become contributing members of society. Thus, the entire college body, including the board, the president, the administration, the students, and the instructors will become accountable to the community being served by the college.

We have entered what Leon Lessinger calls "the age of accountability in education" and we are obliged to examine our purposes to see that the needs of our clients are met by making education answerable to society.[14] And rather than respond defensively by considering accountability a threat, we should accept it positively as a professional responsibility and a commonly accepted ethic that we take for granted in most professions. Equal opportunity will never be realized unless educators are willing to respond to society's urgent needs. Schools cannot be operated as ends in themselves.

Individualized Instruction

Whatever is done to recruit the nontraditional student and provide him with a supportive environment is fruitless unless individual teachers become accountable for producing equal educational results. The instructor is the key to student learning because a teacher's judgment of students' capabilities is the best indicator of the grades those students will receive from that particular teacher. Instructors must understand the unique nature of junior college students and become convinced that the disadvantaged are capable of learning. Unfortunately, junior college instructors

typically are recruited from environments that do not prepare them for teaching in junior colleges. In-service development programs are necessary to make sure those teachers will achieve results in consonance with the junior college philosophy.

The success of junior colleges depends largely upon meeting the needs of nontraditional students and the individual instructor is the only person who can do this. Commonly accepted instructional methods and procedures must be changed if the concern for student learning implicit in the promise of the open door is to be realized. Assigning a grade of "F" to an academically inept student will not cause him to learn. Yet many instructors persist in using this outdated practice.

Colleges espousing an open admissions policy seldom have instituted corresponding adjustments in instructional methods. Teaching is still organized and learning measured in terms of the 50-minute lecture, the textbook, the term paper and written test, semester-hours of credit, and grade-point averages. Few instructors have questioned their own directions, goals, and achievement criteria.

It has become apparent, however, that traditional modes and procedures constitute a restrictive approach to learning for all but the most intellectually talented students. The typical lecture and textbook approach requires a high level of verbal ability and reading comprehension that is lacking in disadvantaged students. A philosophy of equal educational opportunity for all abilities, classes, interests, and ages is required for a nontraditional student body made up of socio-economically deprived, culturally disadvantaged, low achievers. Equal opportunity for these groups will never be realized without drastic changes in traditional methods of instruction.

Learning oriented instruction must become the hallmark of junior colleges. Teachers' lectures cannot be considered synonymous with student learning if the needs of typically heterogeneous student bodies are to be accommodated. Individualized approaches must allow for students who learn best by seeing and doing as well as for those who learn by hearing and reading. Since the primary function of junior colleges is teaching, it should adopt approaches to instruction that stress student learning. It should try new programs and methods that allow for the fact that some students learn faster than others. Given the diversity of student capabilities in the typical junior college classroom, it makes little sense to establish verbal learning in uniform time frames as the standard against which all must be measured.

To the contrary, Benjamin Bloom and other psychologists have advanced the notion that almost all students (perhaps 95 percent) can indeed master what teachers want them to learn. Students distributed in accordance with their aptitudes will achieve a normal distribution of scores if

they are exposed to identical instruction within identical time frames. The only intellectual difference between these students is in their individual learning rates. Bloom claims that when the types of instruction and the time frames available for learning are modified to allow for individual differences between students, 95 percent of them can master a subject with an "A" grade.[15]

The basic ingredients of the mastery approach include:

1. *Individual Examination and Diagnosis of Learning Potential:* Treating each student individually by accepting him at whatever educational level he may have achieved, and then making allowances for his personal rate of learning is the key to Bloom's concept. Obviously this could not be done without examining each individual and diagnosing his learning potential.

2. *Student Participation in Formulating Individual Programs of Educational Development:* By actively participating in selecting objectives, content, and instructional methods, the students' interest and motivation is increased. This approach also insures that content is chosen on the basis of relevance to student needs.

3. *Specification in Behavioral Terms of Learning Objectives:* Specific objectives describe how each course goal is to be reached, the student action required, the conditions of performance, and the minimum performance criterion. These measurable objectives are then given to the students so they will know the requirements of the course.

4. *Flexible Time Frames for Accomplishing Learning Objectives:* Since the time spent learning is the key to mastery, each student progresses at his own rate. Positive reinforcement and successful learning experiences can accelerate individual learning rates.

5. *Nonpunitive, Noncompetitive Grading Standards:* Grades are not relevant in an instructional system where 95 percent of all students may achieve mastery of a subject. Testing is used to assess teaching rather than to categorize students who compete only against themselves.

6. *Greater Utilization of New Instructional Technologies as Alternatives or Supplements to Instructional Techniques Which Depend Wholly Upon Verbal Learning:* Audio-visuals and other media are used as components of learning systems and are selected on the basis of their potential to cause learning. Lectures may be taped, and slides or transparencies used to illustrate specific points. The student is free to use these materials whenever he feels the need and is allowed to progress at his own rate. Individualized instruction arranges course content into manageable sequences of learning. Teaching is evidenced by learning which can be measured in terms of criterion performance. This scientific approach to learning allows teachers to become accountable for achieving equity of educational results.

Implications for the Independent Junior College

While the junior college establishment as a whole is undoubtedly aware of the basic issues described above, pragmatic obstacles frequently inhibit responsive answers: the public sector is overwhelmed with sheer physical growth and all its attendant problems; the private sector, on the other hand, lacks the essential financial margin to embark on extensive reformation of deeply-rooted educational policies and practices. But the private sector has more potential for leading the way. It is unencumbered by restrictions inherent in the administrative and legislative hierarchy which surround public institutions and thus can proceed voluntarily and expeditiously to implement constructive change.

To demonstrate its potential, it seems clear that the private junior college which desires to innovate must have higher levels of funding than the private sector of the economy is able or willing to provide it, at least for the short term. For example, student costs and faculty salaries in the private sector must quickly become competitive with those in the public sector. Funds to expand or adjust curriculums, to promote in-service teacher training, and to update equipment are immediate essentials.

Are funds for these needs available? It all depends. Private junior colleges which are willing to accept the challenges of equal opportunity, educational accountability and instructional improvement need first to present a convincing case to present and potential constituencies. When objectives are translated into institutional commitments, when priorities are established and when planning is accomplished, it is easier to present realistic needs for added funds than when commitments are stated in terms of nebulous generalities and are undefined in terms of specific action programs.

The easiest way to demonstrate this essential point is by way of example. Junior colleges need to respond to the unmet needs of their own constituencies, actual or potential. When necessary, they can do so, as the experience of at least one struggling institution illustrates. Chapter III presents that story.

Introduction

In describing the economic and educational plight of the private junior college in Chapter I, and in presenting emerging concepts of educational opportunity and accountability, and related styles of institutional management in Chapter II, the authors believe that most junior college leaders in the private sector can identify with these points of view. But to drive home the point that these are real on-campus issues, and not merely theoretical problems dear to the heart of the classroom professor, Chapter III presents the story of an actual junior college in transition because of these issues. The essential ingredients are a mounting dilemma, an objective appraisal of alternatives, and a commitment to new purposes and practices. The setting is a small city in western North Carolina; the institution is a relatively small (500 or so students), erstwhile church-related, junior college.

The key ingredients of the dilemma are rising costs and declining enrollments; a narrow and static curriculum; marginal effectiveness in instruction relative to student needs; and, perhaps most important of all, an institutional self-image which was not compatible with corresponding perceptions in the local and regional community.

Following a summary of pertinent factors in the historical background, this chapter describes how the college managed to emerge from the fog of its own traditions and establish new bearings for its purpose, its curriculum offerings, its teaching efforts, and its role in the community. While not a success story in the sense of final accomplishments, it is at this writing a success story in terms of new commitments, a heightened sense of direction for the future, and closer ties with existing as well as potential constituencies. Though details may vary elsewhere, what happened at this institution gives factual significance to the possibilities confronting most private junior colleges in comparable circumstances.

Historical Background*

Mitchell College, Statesville, North Carolina, was originally a church-related educational institution with a long history in the liberal arts tradition. As "one of the oldest colleges in North Carolina, [it] began operations as a women's college in 1856" under the control of the Concord Presbytery. For more than 100 years, its record reflected a fairly common pattern of educational development and service for a Southern junior college, including relatively frequent changes in sponsorship or ownership, fluctuations in the scope and content of its programs, and even different names. Overall, however, its identity remained constant and, by and large, the quality of its facilities and curriculum kept pace with the times, as well as the needs of its constituency. After a brief period as a teachers' college offering the A.B. and B.S. degrees, it became a standard junior college in

*Based primarily upon excerpts from the Mitchell College Catalogue and a 1962 self-study for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

the early 1920's, went coeducational in 1932, and operated a coordinate high school academy until 1943.

The 1950's and 1960's were for Mitchell College, as for most institutions of higher learning throughout the country, periods of relative prosperity and real progress. Among other things, the college raised a respectable endowment, became accredited, acquired new property, and built a new student union and library, partially financed by subscriptions from the local community. Underlying these developments, of course, were the new post-war emphasis on higher education and the growing affluence of the white middle class to whom colleges like Mitchell have traditionally catered.

A College in Trouble: The Moments of Decision

Nevertheless, as early as 1959, symptoms of Mitchell's difficulties began to emerge. This was the year the Concord Presbytery, after reappraising its financial commitments to various colleges in North Carolina, arranged to relinquish control of the college's physical properties to a newly incorporated private organization entitled Mitchell College Foundation, which in turn leased the buildings to Mitchell College, Incorporated.

The corporate charter of the college itself was amended to permit a predominantly lay board of trustees to associate as a corporation for the following substantive educational purposes[16]:

> a. To carry on, operate, maintain and conduct an interdenominational Christian college, school, and educational institution for the education and instruction of qualified persons from Statesville, Iredell County, North Carolina, and elsewhere, but primarily for the instruction and education of qualified students from Statesville, North Carolina and its vicinity, and from Iredell County.
>
> b. To maintain an institution of higher learning exclusively for educational, scientific, literary and religious purposes, without profit.
>
> c. To emphasize Christian education, to promote Christian aims and ideals, and to complement the work of the Christian churches by operating an institution of higher learning based upon Christian principles.
>
> d. To maintain and operate a college and an educational institution in Statesville, North Carolina, or in the immediate vicinity thereof, and to aid and encourage by such maintenance and operation the continuance of the Christian tradition of the institution and the community in which it is now situated.

In summary, Mitchell College in 1959 legally became a non-sectarian institution, no longer controlled or supported by the Presbyterian Church. Its assets (including its endowment) were now the property of a charitable foundation, whose operating subsidiary (the college corporation) would endeavor to run the college as if it were still a church-related school.

Implicit in this arrangement were the clear intentions of the college's patrons to maintain a completely traditional program of studies for a par-

ticularly homogeneous clientele. In fact, the college's official purpose as described in its catalogue merely restated in briefer, less technical language what had been spelled out in legal detail in the college charter:

> Mitchell College is an independent community college which fosters and encourages Protestant Christian education by offering two years of education beyond the high school level and instruction for qualified special students. Its purpose is to serve persons, primarily of this area, for the attainment of personal edification and cultural improvement as they prepare for a degree at a senior institution, complete a terminal course, or satisfy individual needs.[17]

Now it must be said that in North Carolina's educational climate around that time, there was absolutely no reason to suppose that the continuation of such a purpose was not as viable as it was legitimate, desirable and praiseworthy. But what developed around Mitchell College in the next ten years, while not in the least diminishing the patrons' laudable intentions, had the near effect of scuttling their objectives.

By 1968, in brief, North Carolina's system of public community colleges, technical institutes and industrial education centers had moved in force into surrounding counties and towns. Mitchell then found itself operating at 300 students below the normal capacity of its instructional facilities, and having to balance operating losses in its educational and general budget with surplus income from its profitable auxiliary enterprises. Though assisted to some extent by endowment income, occasional small gifts from local benefactors, and minor federal grants, the shrewd business management of the institution could not help but foresee a bleak future. Particularly troublesome prospects were the accumulating needs of deferred maintenance and the debilitating effects of restrictive economies for the instructional budget in the face of rapidly rising educational costs. It was at this point that John Montgomery, president of the college for over 20 years, decided the better part of valor was to call for help.

The AAJC Report

At the request of President Montgomery, the American Association of Junior Colleges furnished Mitchell with a three-man consulting team financed by the Association's Title III/Developing Institutions Project under the Higher Educational Act of 1965. The team spent three days on campus, and subsequently one of its members returned for a follow-up visit. The consultants' report was submitted to President Montgomery in the form of a memorandum on June 19, 1968.[18]

To focus on the major issues, the team reported its findings under five major headings—Finance and Administration, Curriculum, Instruction, Faculty, and Student Services. In general, the team's technique was to identify the college's strongest features in each of the areas, and then to pose crucial questions which, in effect, defined the economic or educational

trends which were undermining these strengths, usually in spite of anything the college itself had done.

For example, under finance and administration the team found that Mitchell College was effectively administered, was meeting a real educational need, and had the support of its local community. In the words of the report:

> It is clear that the administration of Mitchell College has demonstrated prudent management and business practices in the operation of the college . . . The beautiful new library and student union buildings as well as lovely grounds attest to the skillful hand of a strong administrator.
>
> Mitchell College continues to serve a real need for many students who wish to attend a typical liberal arts college and live at home, or students needing a second chance at a college transfer program, or those students unsure of their life goals and future plans.
>
> The Statesville and Iredell County community must also be commended for supporting the college financially. It appears that the citizens are proud of the college and wish to see the college maintained, and strengthened.

Yet, in the same section, the team identified a general trend in Mitchell's environment which led to some penetrating observations and questions:

> The leadership, particularly education leaders, of Iredell must be commended on their energetic approach to improving education. Greatly improved elementary and secondary facilities, lowered drop-out rates, high levels of high school students going on to post-high training all indicate educational statesmanship. One cannot view the past ten years of educational progress in Iredell County with less than unbounding admiration.

The implications of local progress in secondary education raised, in the consultants' views, corresponding and related environmental concerns as to Mitchell's future role and viability at the postsecondary level. The highlights of these concerns were expressed in the following fashion:

> The completion of freeways 40 and 77 will make it possible for the vast majority of Iredell County citizens to be within 30 minutes driving time of several two- and four-year post-high school institutions.
>
> The recent establishment of comprehensive and low tuition community colleges in North Carolina has placed Mitchell College and several near-by community colleges in direct competition for the same students. It is a real possibility that Catawba Valley Technical Institute will attain full community college status in a year or two. The fact that Catawba is currently holding classes of many kinds in Iredell County has a significance for Mitchell.
>
> The problem of securing and maintaining an outstanding faculty is increasingly a private college headache. Competition for instructors is keen, particularly in certain fields. Unless the missionary spirit exists to a large degree, salary still remains the single most important ingredient in fac-

ulty recruitment. It appears that Mitchell has an abnormally high faculty turnover (33 percent as opposed to a normal 15 percent) record.

Closely related to faculty recruitment is the problem of financing an independent college. It appears that currently three out of every four dollars raised to operate Mitchell College are contributed by parents and students.

In terms of these environmental trends, the consultants succinctly stated the central policy issue and then briefly elaborated upon it through four fundamental questions:

A true "community" college must to some degree remain within reach of a large segment of the population financially, geographically, academically, as well as psychologically. Questions must constantly be asked:

1. Is our tuition "within reach" of our people or are we pricing ourselves out of the market?
2. Is our program "within reach" academically of the people we are serving? Can anyone geographically nearby do this job as well or better and cheaper?
3. Is our college providing the counseling and student support services needed by the typical community college student?
4. Are the goals and objectives of our college generally sustained by faculty and students?

In terms of these questions, the consultants next provided more sharply focused observations and questions on environmental factors:

The integration of the Iredell high schools may have some effect on Mitchell. It is understood that the Negro community comprises some 25 percent of the population. As these citizens are integrated into the schools it may mean that Negroes will develop rising and changing aspirations in terms of low-cost post-high school education.

Do the citizens of Iredell County wish to support a "community" college program on a public or private basis? (The nationwide trend seems to favor publicly supported community colleges embracing college transfer, occupational education, adult education, developmental or remedial education and community services under one local governing body). However, each area must decide for itself what may be most desirable.

Even though these statistics must be checked more thoroughly, the fact that one out of five teenagers in Iredell County do not finish high school has implications for certain types of post-high school education needs. Between 400 to 500 high school graduates are not seeking any type of post-high school education and/or training. This also has some implications for planning adult education as well as college programs.

Finally, in summarizing the complexities of these largely external factors, the consultants identified the fundamental policy dilemma—one which had already been partially articulated by the college itself:

> The issue most often mentioned by Mitchell College people centered around the idea of Mitchell remaining an independent community institution or becoming a publicly supported community college. Many factors seem to be pressing the college into making a rather early and permanent decision in this regard.

Having described the major features of the college's problems relative to its role and function in its service area, the consultants gave extensive consideration to curricular and instructional matters within the college, as well as to pertinent aspects of faculty and student affairs. With considerable deftness, the consultants in effect held up a mirror in which the college could see its educational image in realistic terms. With respect to the curriculum, for example, the team had this to say:

> The curriculums of Mitchell College [should] be subjected to critical examination, with particular attention to the desires and responsibilities of the institution toward meeting the pre-employment needs of the high school graduates of Iredell County and Statesville. It would appear that the considerable portion of graduates of Mitchell who accept the general college diploma would provide a beginning market for certain occupational skill training.
>
> Along with the inspection of the curriculum, a survey of the community should be undertaken to determine what kinds of training would be most appropriate and desirable from the standpoint of opportunities to use the training locally. Some provision needs to be made for the 400 to 500 young people who enter the labor force each year with little or no specific preparation.

With respect to instruction, the sharpness of the criticism reflected considerable input from the student customers. Yet in focusing on student views on the quality and effectiveness of the instruction (as well as some of the underlying reasons) the consultants were merely describing in a particular instance what has been by far the most pervasive negative criticism of the junior college as such:

> Indications from discussion with students are that there is wide range in the effectiveness and attractiveness of instruction. Some considered the quality of instruction at Mitchell to be inferior to that received in high school. One negative criticism centered on the lack of revision and up-dating of course material. Other negative comments related to the lack of relationship between course intent and content, especially where great amounts of "busy work" were required. Of course there were also complimentary remarks: small class sizes seemed to be appreciated.
>
> The majority of instructional personnel were viewed as especially competent and the greater part of the instruction was considered superior. If it were the case that the inferior instructors were those younger faculty members who tend to move on after a year or so, this would be different

than the situation which in fact exists; the lack of that exceptional teaching which is considered characteristic of and essential to the community college appears in long- as well as short-term faculty.

Among its own students, the public school personnel, and the general public, Mitchell enjoys a reputation for success in instruction, particularly with those students who are not especially endowed with ability, maturity, and drive. Resolution of the apparent incongruity—inferior instruction and superior results—may lie in the fact that one kind of instruction is not always appropriate for all students. This may indicate a need for improvement of faculty, through up-dating and review, which will require more than the usual extension course availability.

Finally, in view of the college's long tradition as a church-related institution and the 1959 decision to continue that tradition under private auspices, the following summary of campus attitudes at Mitchell seems especially pertinent. What stands out especially is the apparent credibility gap between conventional objectives of the sectarian junior college and the expectations of the junior college's contemporary constituencies:

> In the short time of questioning students, faculty and administration by the consultants, opinion seems to vary vastly as to the definition of a Christian education. Some feel that the principles and teachings of Jesus should be more clearly articulated and personalized. Others feel that there is no consistent definition of a Christian education and therefore the goals and objectives of the college tend to be fuzzy and a divisive force among the students and faculty. Based upon a limited sample, it appears that faculty and students may not support or perhaps understand the primary objectives of the college.

Concerning these and other evaluations of problems internal to the college, the consultants provided many specific suggestions and alternative courses of action. In general, however, the team had noted at the outset that ". . . three days of dialogue and questioning can only develop cursory and somewhat surface observations about Mitchell College. Outlined here are our first impressions and must be read in that light."[19] In view of the analysis that followed, one is tempted to suspect the team was being excessively modest and overcautious. Its most emphatic recommendations were confined to alternatives concerning the college's future status as a public or a private institution. In particular, the team gave special prominence to its recommendation that the college conduct a feasibility study under the following parameters:

> Some definite decision should be made within the next year by the board of trustees as to whether Mitchell should remain independent or go public. It is entirely possible that federal funds (Developing Colleges Act) might be obtained by the college to conduct a feasibility and planning study. If Catawba Valley [Technical Institute] is planning to seek full-fledged community college status it may be possible to make a joint

study proposal. The federal government is currently looking kindly on cooperative proposals. Cooperative proposals from the private as well as public sector seem to be well accepted. Any such study must explore all the alternatives. The study list should include, but not be limited to the following:

a. Remain as is, but solidify the financial base.
b. Remain independent but broaden the curriculum to more nearly meet the needs of the middle 50 percent of the Iredell County youth and adults and solidify the financial base.
c. Remain independent but develop cooperative arrangements with near-by community colleges and local high schools.
d. Go public and develop a comprehensive community college program for Iredell County. The recent vacating of Morningside High School may make it possible for Mitchell to develop a creative occupational education program for both high school and college students. Such a study might be funded by the Federal Vocational Act.
e. Join Catawba Valley Technical Institute and formulate a two campus-two county comprehensive community college.
f. Develop a consortium of private and independent two- and four-year colleges for cooperative enterprises.

As things turned out, the college opted for a unilateral feasibility study and successfully applied for a Title III planning grant. The more categorical findings of this study, which incorporated and reinforced many of the recommendations of the AAJC study, are detailed here.

The Feasibility Study

Through the resources of the Junior College Division of the Regional Education Laboratory for the Carolinas and Virginia (RELCV), Mitchell College arranged for independent consultants to conduct the feasibility study, which began in July, 1968 and was completed approximately one year later.[20] A generalist in higher education, with previous experience in statewide planning of community college systems, headed the study group. Specialists included research and development experts in higher education in general and community college programs in particular; a vice president for financial affairs of a major university; and a management information systems consultant. (The study was cooperatively designed, administered, and interpreted by members of the consultant team with technical assistance from the Southeastern Regional Office of Educational Testing Service.)

Study techniques included review of the college's official records (charters, catalogues, president's reports to the board, financial statements, etc.); interviews with board members, administration, faculty, students, and local school officials as well as community leaders; and a specially designed student market survey to determine college-going patterns among local high school seniors as well as student attitudes toward Mitchell College.

The report of the study was submitted to the college on August 27, 1969. It was organized under two major headings, "Report to the Trustees" and "Report to the Administration." The first part dealt with such broad policy matters as the college's mission and finances, as well as needs in the area of student recruiting and financial aid, curriculum, faculty, and master planning. The second part considered in more detail the administrative aspects of these same problems, including possible courses of action should the board decide to adopt the policy recommendations submitted to it. Appendices included detailed studies of the student market and the financial statements of the college, as well as a unit cost analysis based on expenditures for instructional salaries and fringe benefits. The entire study was of course made available to both the board and the college staff.

Part I of the report was relatively brief and to the point, suggesting that a change in Mitchell's purpose and image was essential to the college's survival, whether it went public or remained private. It noted serious problems in the area of finance which had to be solved simply to keep the college alive, let alone to develop it as a competitive institution on the contemporary scene.

With respect to purpose, the report stated categorically:

> Mitchell College has no future as a two-year liberal arts college emphasizing Protestant Christian education. A 1969 survey of Statesville/Iredell high school seniors reveals that the college appeals only to a small (and probably shrinking) minority of college aspirants. Among all seniors, prevailing reactions to the college's educational program and campus environment ranged from negative to indifferent.

On the positive side, however, the consultants felt there was still enough substance in Mitchell's community status to experiment with a change in direction without a change in governance and control. Accordingly, the report had this to say:

> This report recommends instead that Mitchell undertake a development program to enhance its mission as a two-year community college. Preference is expressed for retaining Mitchell's private status, although a final decision in this respect is strictly a matter for the board's consideration.
>
> Even so, the board should realize it can expect increasing competition from North Carolina's expanding system of public community colleges. In fact, the possibility of affiliating with the public system should not be dismissed entirely. But prior to making an irreversible decision, the board should endeavor to strengthen Mitchell's position as a private community college.
>
> The board's leadership will be crucial in a successful effort to strengthen the college. Policy statements are needed which will define the college's mission in unambiguous terms. Members of the board must help to in-

terpret the college to the community and assist in the solicitation of support from the community.

Yet, it was clear that the college's financial position was, to say the least, precarious. In fact, the study's major financial consultant observed:

> With one bad year or at the most two, the college could easily become defunct. They appear to run a "tight ship" but costs are increasing . . . They are operating on a very close margin and with slight operating increases they could be in trouble . . .

In view of the apparently critical financial situation, the consultants recommended a more intensive fund-raising program within the local community, as well as stepped-up efforts to qualify for federal grants, particularly under the several titles of the Higher Educational Act of 1965. But more fundamentally, the consultants pointed out that if the college could simply increase enrollment levels from a current 500 or so full-time equivalents, to the capacity of its existing instructional facilities (estimated at 800 head-count), tuition income alone would put the college comfortably in the black. The drawback to this suggestion was, of course, the college's non-competitive tuition. But the consultants went on to observe that funds for Educational Opportunity Grants and Work/Study programs were going begging in North Carolina; and furthermore that the college's own modest scholarship program was not calibrated to the financial need of the average college aspirant in the Statesville/Iredell area.

The consultants felt that if the "Mitchell experiment" were to succeed, long-range development strategy had to undergird short-term financial tactics. Accordingly, the consultants' basic policy recommendations (with explanatory comments) to the board of trustees consisted of the following:

The board of trustees should redefine the purpose of Mitchell College as a non-sectarian community college. As a matter of basic policy, the board needs to clarify what kind of college it really intends Mitchell to be. Is Mitchell an interdenominational (sectarian) liberal arts college? Or an independent community college? Official descriptions project both images. But no one college can really be both, because they are radically different types of institutions. The present ambiguity confuses the Mitchell image and dilutes its energies. The above recommendation proposes the best way out of the dilemma.

The board of trustees should authorize a master plan for Mitchell College based upon its mission as a community college. If Mitchell is to survive in the long run, it needs to establish guidelines for its future development. Priority should be given to planning in finance and student recruiting. Wherever possible, the college should involve community leadership in helping it to define local educational needs and in raising funds to meet these needs.

The rationale behind these recommendations, including fund-raising efforts, was elaborated for the board in terms of changing institutional trends in American higher education, effective methods of student recruiting, competitive faculty salaries, and the strategies of master planning. Concerning Mitchell's purpose, the consultants drew a contrast between the futility of further attempts to compete as a liberal arts college and the promise of focusing directly on the objectives of a community college:

> The Articles of Incorporation and the catalogue give an emphasis to Mitchell's church-related, liberal arts tradition which is simply not compatible with contemporary realities in American higher education. Without specific church sponsorship, the college lacks a sizeable constituency on which it can depend for students and financial support. Also, most successful liberal arts colleges today are scholarship-oriented, four-year institutions; they typically cater to highly selective, relatively affluent, cosmopolitan student populations. It would be entirely unrealistic to suppose the college at this late date could adjust to the status of a contemporary liberal arts college.
>
> On the other hand, Mitchell displays considerable potential for strengthening its role as a two-year community college. Such institutions are organized primarily to serve local students from average and low-income families. Their particular appeal is to students who need to 'find themselves' in a low pressure academic environment before going on to more advanced and sophisticated college-level work; or to students whose career goals do not require four or more years of higher education.
>
> By virtue of its location, staff, and program, Mitchell has the basic educational ingredients to operate as a strong community college. It enjoys a good reputation for working with students of average or low ability. Its faculty is dedicated to effective teaching. In some ways, therefore, Mitchell is already functioning as a community college and should expend its energies and resources in doing an even better job.

With respect to student recruiting, the report bore down heavily on the need to make junior college education financially feasible for the average college aspirant, and on the fiscal implications of an effective student aid program for the college's financial difficulties:

> A major feature of the community college is its commitment to equal educational opportunity. Such a commitment entails two major operating policies, *i.e.*, 'open door' admissions and low tuition. As a private institution, Mitchell must of necessity charge high tuition; but, unlike many private institutions, Mitchell seems largely indifferent to the tuition barrier which could be lowered through scholarships, work-study programs and the like. If Mitchell is to function as a true community college, it needs to make fundamental changes in its posture with respect to student aid.

Aside from policy considerations, evidence from the high school survey indicates relatively few Statesville/Iredell seniors are willing to make a financial sacrifice to attend Mitchell. A much larger group indicated its preference for low-cost technical institutes and public community colleges. Mitchell needs to compete for these potential students, not only because many of them will not actually go to college without some form of financial assistance, but because larger enrollments from the local high schools are essential to Mitchell's survival. A major portion of funds awarded to students in the form of scholarships, etc. will find their way back to the college in the form of tuition revenue. Finally, it should not be overlooked that potential donors are often more willing to help students finance their education than to help colleges balance their budgets.

More specifically, the report subsequently introduced the concept of financial aid packages as the basis for an effective student aid program:

> Student aid . . . must be used to make the student costs at Mitchell comparable to the costs of attending other institutions within commuting distance of Statesville/Iredell. An effective program calibrated to need . . . should be flexible enough to provide some students with full support . . .
>
> . . . trends indicate both state and federal governments will intensify their efforts to provide equal educational opportunity for students from comparatively deprived economic backgrounds. In conjunction with local fund-raising for student aid, therefore, the college should also explore student aid programs under Title IV of the Higher Educational Act of 1965; in particular, the educational opportunity grants and the work-study program.

With respect to competitive faculty salaries, the report warned of serious implications for the quality of instruction if present salary levels were not improved:

> No less critical than the need to attract more students is the need to retain a highly-qualified faculty . . . Competent teachers are no longer willing to forego adequate income for the so-called intangible rewards of a scholarly life. They perceive instead that the salary gap is, in effect, an involuntary subsidy of their students' education, or their college's operations. Unless Mitchell moves quickly to generate funds earmarked for faculty salary improvement, it may find itself confronted with an irreversible decline in the quality of its faculty, as dedicated teachers retire and others move on to better positions.

Master planning was viewed by the consultants as something of a conditional proposition. Specifically, it was felt that the college should not commit itself to sizeable future developments unless local leadership evidenced substantial interest in supporting Mitchell as an independent community college:

> In general, the college needs to be reasonably assured of community support before embarking on an ambitious program of long-range development. The goals of the fund-raising program [should be] those to which local constituencies will most readily respond, if they are really interested in helping 'their' college and understand what it is trying to do . . .
>
> Successful fund-raising would, more than any other evidence, testify to the feasibility of embarking upon a long-range development program in accordance with a master plan. In the meantime, the college should draft the major features of a master plan conforming to the recommendations of the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC) in its June 1968 study of Mitchell College. Professional guidance in master planning is undoubtedly available to the college through its affiliation with the Regional Education Laboratory for the Carolinas and Virginia and through its participation in the AAJC Program for Developing Institutions.

In its report to the administration, the consultants discussed at length procedural steps for enhancing its financial planning, its student recruiting program, and its efforts at curriculum reform and instructional improvement. Recommendations on financial planning were summarized as follows:

> In general, financial planning will be more effective if it is based on detailed cost projections for anticipated growth, improvements and general inflationary trends. For example, if the college should undertake the development program outlined herein, several different factors will contribute to a much higher level of operating expenditures . . . It would be desirable to project costs as much as five to ten years ahead, using validated cost guidelines. In this way, future needs for increased income can be readily evaluated.

Suggestions for a more effective student recruiting program were based primarily upon an assessment of current procedures, but particularly upon an examination of student profiles and attitudes developed from data in the student market survey. Highlights of the report's general findings included the following comments:

> The basic problem of student recruiting is largely a matter of public relations. The college needs to ensure that a broader segment of the local college-age population feels that it is welcome at Mitchell and understands the educational opportunities available there . . . In general the college should make a greater effort to reach out into the local community, with particular emphasis on personal contact. There is a critical need to offset the 'don't know much about it' attitude that many students have concerning the college, and to overcome the negative reactions of others. Brief visits with the local high school superintendents in connection with the student market survey suggest that appropriate college efforts to work more closely with their students would not be unwelcome.

> It would seem desirable for the college to enlist the aid of its faculty and students in establishing a more personal approach to the recruiting of local students. One possibility is to organize and promote a speakers bureau; another is to arrange for high school students to visit the campus, attend classes, talk with faculty and students, and socialize at a student union reception.
>
> The college might also consider establishing a higher educational counseling service for Statesville and Iredell under Section 408 of the Title IV student aid programs. While this service would necessarily have broader aims than recruiting students for Mitchell, there would be a spin-off in terms of good will that could be used to advantage in the Mitchell recruiting program . . .
>
> Recent efforts to improve the college catalogue should be continued. It would help to present the college more effectively if the introductory sections of the catalogue could be extensively revised, with less emphasis on the college's history and more on substantive information which students look for in considering college careers. Also program descriptions should be written to underline their relationship to senior college programs and to occupational careers. A study of the catalogues of comparable institutions might provide some guidelines in these respects.

As noted, many of the report's estimates of Mitchell's status in its service area, as well as its recommendations on student recruiting and financial aid, were grounded in factual data developed from a custom-designed student market survey. As far as the authors can determine, a survey of this sort represented a novel approach to institutional self-appraisal, and has significance as a new research instrument in higher education. The concept, techniques, and impact of the survey were summarized in the appendix of the report as follows:

> To assess the status of Mitchell College, it was felt desirable to gather background information on the college's largest potential source of students, *i.e.*, the high school populations of the Statesville/Iredell area. Accordingly, a study was designed that would (1) relate the college aspirations of local high school seniors to their significant biographical characteristics, *e.g.*, high school record, family income, parents' occupation, religious preference, etc.; and (2) record attitudes and perceptions of these students relative to the educational program at Mitchell College, as well as to its image as a contemporary institution of higher learning. In order to objectify the results of the attitudinal survey, a comparable survey of attitudes and perceptions among Mitchell College students and faculty was also conducted.
>
> Experience with this survey leads its authors to believe it can have significant value as a research-based approach to a number of current problems in institutional planning for higher educational development. The

specific form and procedures used for Mitchell College are, of course, valid only for that institution.

As it turned out, the survey data did indeed provide the consultants and the college with penetrating insights about Mitchell's potential customers, both in terms of their college aspirations in general and their attitude toward Mitchell in particular. For example, the following table, with interpretative comments, presents a selective profile of these potential customers.

Summary of College Aspirations, High School Record and Family Income Reported by Statesville-Iredell Seniors, 1968-69

Plan to Attend:	Number*	%	Average Grade	Family Income**
A Senior College	225	29	B+	12,000
A Technical Inst.	140	18	B−***	8,000
Mitchell College	95	12	B−	9,400
A Community College	80	10	C+****	10,500
No Plans	240	31	C+	8,500
Total	780	100		

* *Figures rounded to the nearest 5.*
** *Approximate.*
*** *Numerically slightly lower than the next grade.*
**** *Numerically slightly higher than the next grade.*

Interpretations of this table must be qualified by several factors. With respect to college plans, experience in North Carolina indicates that approximately half of those who have said they plan to continue their education will not realize their aspirations; those who do not are generally those with lower grades and family income. With respect to high school record and family income, students are fairly accurate in evaluating their own high school performance, but tend to overestimate their parents' income. Finally, these data constitute a sample for one year only. But there is no reason to believe the pattern would shift in any significant respect from year to year.

In the consultants' view, at least two significant conclusions were to be drawn from this data alone: (1) Mitchell did not have substantial appeal among even those local students whose future plans included a post-high school educational career; (2) assuming the availability of an attractive student aid program, Mitchell's efforts at competitive recruiting could be readily formulated. In particular:

It would appear from these data that Mitchell's most immediate source of additional local students is within the combined groups (220) which plan to attend community colleges and technical institutes. They report

grades which do not differ significantly, on the average, from the Mitchell group; and while it is difficult to judge why some of them have chosen community colleges in preference to Mitchell, it is reasonable to speculate that the Mitchell image and costs were among the significant factors. In the technical institute group, finances appear to have been a large factor, though career goals were undoubtedly influential.

The college would do well to consider whether a portion of the non-college group might be influenced to try its hand at post-secondary education, particularly in developmental courses or occupational training. Traditionally, liberal arts colleges have not deliberately recruited students who are not ordinarily regarded as 'college material' (though a few of the more venturesome institutions are now changing their attitudes). On the other hand, community colleges do reach out to worthy students who need a second chance.

It was also apparent from the attitudinal portion of the survey that the college had to improve its image in this potential market. Allowing for some distortion of perceptions from the outside, it was still evident that on the whole local students were less than enthusiastic about Mitchell:

> Many local seniors see Mitchell as a convenient, attractive institution with a friendly student body and interested teachers. They believe the college provides opportunities for students who cannot meet the more rigid and selective standards of the senior colleges, and thus perceive it as a good place to pursue college transfer studies. The college has a strong, but small, cluster of ardent and loyal aspirants who list Mitchell as their first choice.
>
> On the other hand, there are some students who feel Mitchell offers impoverished program options; most of these feel strongly that the college should expand its offerings in business education. Others are critical of the college's relatively limited extracurricular program (especially in sports and social activities) . . .
>
> Quite a few are particularly sensitive to the paternalistic image of the college, as reflected in the rules for student conduct (*e.g.*, "old-fashioned," "dull," "non-progressive," etc.). The Negro student population almost invariably views the college as cold and hostile. And a fair proportion of the total population feels it is not well informed about the college at all.

Some of the negative attitudes toward campus environment may have been conveyed to local high school students by the college's own students, and perhaps the faculty as well. At least, the corresponding attitudinal survey among Mitchell students and faculty reflected comparable concerns:

> Representative students at Mitchell reveal strong antipathy to the *in loco parentis* style of the college. Their objections sometimes take the form of a deliberate flouting of the rules which amounts to an almost open rebellion.

There is no evidence to suggest that religious emphasis at the college is either a positive or negative influence in the general student life. In short, this aspect of the college program seems to be tolerated, but with no great amount of enthusiasm.

In most ways, of course, Mitchell students display genuine affection and appreciation for the college, and especially for the evident concern of the teachers for their academic welfare. Yet, student *esprit* does not appear to be as strong as that displayed by the faculty. Most of the teachers, though acknowledging that the college tends to be authoritarian in its ways, relatively slow in reacting to change, and somewhat unrewarding in terms of intellectual and cultural values, still reflect a spirit of intense loyalty to Mitchell and believe quite strongly in its potential for serving the Statesville/Iredell area.

The expressed concerns of students via the survey were also to some extent a determining factor in the consultants recommendations with respect to the curriculum. Equally important, however, was the fact that the college had not adjusted its curriculum to conform to changing styles throughout higher education or to emerging demands in the socio-economic environment:

> Problems of curriculum revision and reform are primarily matters of continuing critical self-appraisal relative to the needs and interests of students and the community. The conventional lower division program in the arts and sciences might be considerably strengthened by the addition of more courses dealing with the social, political and cultural interests of contemporary students. A student-faculty committee on curriculum should be asked to submit periodic recommendations on planning the lower division program. This program should also be reviewed in terms of changing requirements in senior colleges which accept a significant number of Mitchell transfers. Development of long-range plans should include some consideration of recent curricular innovations in liberal arts colleges, as well as the growing need for more effective remedial programs in two-year colleges.
>
> The college should concentrate most of its immediate efforts in curriculum development on occupational training. Initially, such efforts will have to focus on business education. Expanded offerings in data processing are especially relevant to current training needs in business and industry. The secretarial program should add courses for an emphasis in professional specialities, *e.g.*, legal and medical secretaries.
>
> As one aspect of master planning, a committee consisting largely of representatives from business, industry and the professions should assist the college in conducting a survey of occupational training needs in the Statesville/Iredell area.

One of the factors in the college's current situation, which had influenced the consultants' decision to recommend intensive development of

Mitchell as a privately-sponsored community college, was the evidence of something more than incipient interest among administrators and faculty in innovative instructional practices. Basically, of course, the favorable reputation of the Mitchell faculty among its own students, as well as in the local community, was already a promising sign. In addition, the college had taken steps of its own to upgrade teaching effectiveness, as recommended in the AAJC study. First, it had worked out a bilateral arrangement with Duke University under Title III of the Higher Educational Development Act of 1965 to send selected teachers for a summer workshop in Instructional Strategies. Second, it was one of the first colleges to enter RELCV's junior college consortium, which—as it developed—gave first priority to a multi-institutional cooperative effort to promote the systems approach to instruction among all faculty of the participating institutions. The report acknowledged Mitchell's leadership in this respect and offered other minor suggestions for instructional improvement:

> The college's current efforts to improve instruction comprise a major reason why this report favors the continuing development of Mitchell as a community college. The administration and faculty are to be especially commended for the emphasis they are placing on superior instruction as a key ingredient in the Mitchell program. The college's participation in the recently-initiated regional program of faculty development can do much to strengthen its effectiveness as a teaching institution for students of average and low ability. The recent employment of a media specialist can also lead to improvements in the quality of instruction. Master planning should include arrangements for relieving the faculty of routine clerical duties and for shifting the major responsibilities of student counseling to professionally trained counselors.

The report concluded with comments on various aspects of the curriculum that appeared unnecessarily costly; and with summarized results of a space utilization study that revealed, in general, ample classroom and laboratory availability for scheduling of new classes and for larger enrollments in present classes.

Subsequent Developments

The report was presented and interpreted to the full board of trustees and the administration in October, 1969. Discussion during that meeting revealed considerable determination on the part of the trustees to retain Mitchell's private status; some, however, had misgivings about abandoning its liberal arts emphasis. Nevertheless, the board endorsed the study in principle and requested the administration to recommend steps to implement it.

At a January, 1970 meeting of the board's executive committee a new statement of purpose was presented to and endorsed by the committee for inclusion in the 1970-71 catalogue. The statement itself reveals the board's implicit endorsement of the AAJC report and the Feasibility Study:[21]

Mitchell college is an independent community college which seeks to expand educational opportunity to students, primarily from this area, and to provide educational programs that are responsive to the needs of the local community. It offers the standard college transfer curriculum for students intending to continue their education at senior colleges or universities, and career programs for those whose major interest is immediate preparation for employment. The college has recently begun a program to serve the employment needs of local business, industry and the professions. It is also initiating new teaching methods designed for students with special learning problems, and is developing a financial aid program to support promising students in the continuation of their studies at the post-high school level.

The committee also adopted administrative recommendations to (1) develop a more aggressive recruiting program for local high school graduates and (2) assess local needs for occupational training programs and related educational services. An *ad hoc* board committee was established to work closely with the president and dean in formulating specific objectives and procedures to carry out these recommendations.

By July, 1970 the *ad hoc* committee had taken the following steps:

1. Established as a specific objective an increase of 200-300 students in Mitchell's enrollment over a five-year period.
2. Appointed a permanent joint committee consisting of representatives from the board, administration, faculty, student body, and community to implement this objective.
3. Approved a budgetary allocation in the new fiscal year to (a) underwrite administrative costs of the developmental program and (b) to provide matching funds for a proposed substantial increase in student aid.

The permanent committee elected the dean of the college as chairman and divided itself into four task forces to formulate detailed projects in student recruiting and financial aid, curriculum development, campus environment and community relations. The first week in October was set as the deadline for progress reports from each of the task forces.

Initial reports from the task forces were submitted to the chairman in early October; the chairman, in turn, presented a consolidated summary of these reports to the full board in late October. Briefly summarized, the highlights of each task force report were as follows[22]:

1. *Student Recruiting and Financial Aid:* College personnel (including faculty and students) to work closely with local high school counselors in identifying potential college aspirants, with special emphasis on the nontraditional student; personal visits with such students at school or home; use of diagnostics inventory test; explanation to potential students of objectives and procedures of the systems approach to instruction as employed by Mitchell College.

2. *Curriculum Development:* Add eight new courses to the curriculum to implement two-year programs for medical and legal secretaries, mid-management business personnel, and data processing computer programmers; continue exploration with two local hospitals to establish at Mitchell College a joint associate degree program in nursing to replace an existing diploma school of nursing.
3. *Campus Environment:* Establish a separately organized counseling office, with special emphasis on counseling services for nontraditional students. Appoint a director of clubs to promote a broader scope of extracurricular activities; establish and furnish a student lounge to promote a broader scope of informal social and cultural activities; establish an administration/student committee to recommend to the faculty and trustees revisions in the rules of student conduct; extend "open hours" for the library and audio-visual laboratory to promote more independent study in accordance with the systems approach; improve the campus newspaper and provide an on-campus newsstand for local and out-of-town papers.
4. *Community Relations:* Establish a permanent "town and gown" committee to coordinate college academic programs with community needs; promote the college's image and needs with the community through a speakers bureau and a public relations director; explore with community leaders alternative possibilities of increased financial support through private contributions and/or local taxes.

At this writing, the major recommendations of these task forces are being considered by the board and administration. It is important to note that the task forces did not make any recommendations on the financial aspects of their proposals, nor were they requested to do so. The major point of the task force approach was simply to define some particular activities which would promote overall developmental objectives in order that financial planning and decisions could proceed systematically. The board and administration anticipated that additional costs would necessarily evolve and desired at this point simply enough substance and direction for specific proposals so that costs could be estimated realistically and fund-raising proposals developed in terms of compelling objectives.

The continuing evolution of the Mitchell story depends largely upon the imagination and vigor with which the college can sell its new approach to its potential constituencies and prospective financial supporters. Now, at least, it has set realistic, contemporary goals toward which to work.

Academic Self-Renewal

In the preceding section, primary emphasis was given to governance and administrative changes evolving at Mitchell College as a result of the institutional self-appraisal stimulated by the AAJC and feasibility studies. Equally important were simultaneous developments taking place at the very core of Mitchell's academic life, in terms of new teaching styles which reflect aspects of educational accountability and individualized instruction

described in Chapter II. These parallel developments evolved largely as a result not of the consultants' efforts, but from forces at work in other dimensions. One major factor was the continuing desire of Mitchell's faculty itself to maintain its reputation as a teaching group whose primary concern was student learning. Another was the growing influence of innovative junior college educators on the staff of the Regional Education Laboratory for the Carolinas and Virginia (RELCV), in Durham. How these intersecting forces produced a crucial revitalization in academic performance at Mitchell College is recounted below.

As previously noted, Mitchell College was one of the first colleges to enter RELCV's junior college consortium, which was established in late 1968, at just about the time the Feasibility Study was getting under way. The rationale and objectives of the consortium program were described by RELCV:

> The Regional Education Laboratory for the Carolinas and Virginia has recently established a Junior and Community College Division to assist the two-year colleges of the region in a program of institutional research and development geared to the improvement of long-range planning and decision-making, which in turn, is designed to lead toward constructive innovation and change in the more substantive aspects of educational practice.
>
> An immediate laboratory project will be the formation of a consortium of nine junior and community colleges within the three-state region. Initial emphasis of the consortium will focus on problems of the low-ability student. Consortium institutions will work together on institutional research projects designed to improve existing institutional remedial programs. Other research and development approaches will be decided upon by consortium members after its establishment.[23]

In addition to a statement of positive interest in laboratory-sponsored activities, participating colleges were asked to commit one-half of a selected staff member's time to participate in laboratory activities and to engage in institutional research and development activities on his own campus. It was suggested that the specified staff member be designated the Educational Development Officer (EDO), and that the colleges also be prepared to involve faculty members in the program, with each EDO coordinating and supervising activities for his own college.

Once institutional commitments were secured, the laboratory's strategies for promoting instructional improvement among member college faculties were basically quite simple:[24]

1. Specify long-range goals and progressive annual objectives for converting instructional programs at member colleges to individualized instructional procedures in accordance with the systems approach.
2. Produce self-instructional teacher training packages that were, in effect,

models of the systems procedures the teachers were to follow in their own teaching activities.
3. Expose faculty to these teaching models through summer workshops, and encourage administrators to give teachers in training released time in the following semester for converting one or more courses to the systems approach.
4. Hold corresponding workshops for EDOs on the systems approach, and on relevant techniques of institutional research for measuring its impact on campus.
5. Explain to presidents and board members the philosophy and objectives of the program, and provide them with status and progress reports, through periodic workshops and topical papers.

Mitchell College was an immediate respondent to the RELCV invitation and, in a subsequent letter to the director of the laboratory's junior college division, President Montgomery of Mitchell wrote, "We are looking forward to working with this program and are optimistic about the effect it will have on our program."

Moreover, Mitchell took the lead in getting other colleges involved in the RELCV consortium. In April, 1969, for example, President Montgomery wrote to the President of Kittrell College (a predominantly Negro junior college north of Raleigh, N. C.) as follows:

> Through . . . the Junior and Community College Division of RELCV . . . we have learned that you, like Mitchell, are extremely interested in instructional improvement.
>
> Mitchell College is participating in the program which RELCV is sponsoring and, in addition, we have been funded under Title III for a program of faculty and instructional improvement in connection with Duke University. As a part of this program, we are planning a workshop at Duke to explore this new instructional approach. A maximum of ten of our faculty members will attend the workshop and tentative dates have been set for August 6-20.
>
> We would be delighted to have some of your faculty members participate in this workshop if you feel that you can work it into your program and that it would be of benefit to your institution. We are excited about the program and, if you are interested, shall be glad to discuss details with you.

In the summer of 1969, ten volunteer faculty members from Mitchell, together with a corresponding number from Kittrell, participated in the first instructional systems workshop at Duke University, with specialists and consultants from RELCV serving as workshop leaders. In the following academic year (1969-70), Mitchell employed five instructor-assistants to carry one-half of the teaching load of these ten faculty members, who spent the first semester revising their courses and the second semester

teaching the restructured courses in the first on-campus test of the consortium program. In the summer of 1970, similar workshops were held on each of the member college campuses, with Kittrell College serving as overall program coordinator and RELCV as the assisting agency. The Mitchell workshop drew 21 participants out of a total full-time equivalent faculty of 27, with some attending for the second time.

Plans for 1971 project the total involvement of the Mitchell faculty, with a program structure that emphasizes orientation for new faculty members and refresher training for second- and third-year participants. Beyond 1971, it is anticipated that emphasis will shift more and more from faculty training to revising and updating of instructional procedures, based on experience gained in the initial years of the program; evaluation procedures will include validated results of institutional research on the program, designed under the supervision of the RELCV staff and conducted on each campus by the consortium EDOs.

Since the Mitchell faculty had organized for its own instructional improvement efforts in 1969 (approximately a year ahead of other consortium members), it was able to indicate preliminary results to the consortium just as the total program was getting fully under way in 1970. In a brief report to the laboratory's junior college division in June, 1970, the Mitchell EDO had this to say:

> . . . faculty reports already indicate the changeover is producing phenomenal success in causing students to learn: even for marginal students the failure rate has declined from a range of 25 percent to 60 percent in previous years to a current maximum of less than 10 percent.

In one sense, the commitment of the Mitchell faculty to innovative practices in instruction reflect one of the major themes of this monograph: specifically, the role of the private junior college as a prototype for the junior college of the future. In a closely related sense, however, the involvement of the trustees, the leadership of the president, and the technical assistance of RELCV acting as an external change agent were all indispensable components of the Mitchell College story to date. The changes at Mitchell College, both as a total institution and in terms of its constituent parts, give substance to the assertion in Chapter II that "drastic changes in the attitudes of instructors, administrators and governance officials are required," if the junior college of tomorrow is to become higher education's leading exponent of equal opportunity.

The success of new commitments in the typical private junior college depends largely on enlightened educational leadership and a resolution of critical financial problems. The relationship between educational leadership and financial strength is essentially that of cause and effect.

In the case of Mitchell, for example, new commitments have been made that can lead to continuing self-renewal. It is more than likely that next

year the college will have successfully passed the first financial hurdle in its efforts to compete more effectively with low-tuition community colleges and technical institutes. It has reorganized its student aid program in terms of the "package" concept consisting, in varying proportions, of private scholarship money, educational opportunity grants, work-study funds and, as appropriate, student loans. While the program itself hinges upon favorable reactions to its applications for federal student aid funds (there is a large surplus of these funds in North Carolina) the major point is that the college now has a highly-focused student aid plan to implement its new purpose. The college is challenging the public interest at local, state and federal levels to show that they mean business in promoting equal opportunity.

After 20 years of active leadership, President Montgomery retired at the end of June, 1970. The trustees, following an intensive search for a new president, guided largely by its judgment of the various candidates' insights into and agreement with Mitchell's new institutional style, announced the selection of a new president at its October, 1970 meeting. Effective February, 1971, Dr. Barton R. Herrscher became the new president of Mitchell College. The remainder of this chapter consists primarily of the new president's perspective on the role and function of Mitchell College as it enters a new decade of decision.

Prospects for the Future

Mitchell College is striving to become a private, open door community college. It seeks to combine the best elements of the private junior college (a resident student body, a campus life, a responsive and flexible program unencumbered by state or district bureaucratic demands, etc.) with those well-established characteristics of the public community college (open door admissions policy, comprehensive curricular offerings, community services, etc.). Student opportunity for a well-rounded college experience—successful learning experiences combined with personally satisfying social and recreational experiences—is an important goal of the college.

The instructional program and institutional support for it are the two major areas requiring attention if the 120-year-old, historically traditional college is to become an innovative model. The basic posture established by Mitchell College regarding institutional improvement, when carried to its logical conclusion, might create a college having the characteristics briefly outlined below.

The instructional program.

The general objectives of the instructional program will focus on the purpose and techniques of effective teaching. *Teaching is the process of causing learning; if no learning occurs, it may be inferred that no teaching has taken place.* This tenet is the overall philosophy which guides the college. All faculty and administrators are committed to student learning as the

primary goal of the college. Similarly, individualized instruction within the broad framework of a systematic approach is the basic strategy of the instructional program.

1. Students are given all the time they need to master course objectives. A wide variety of instructional media are used to facilitate student learning.

2. Faculty responsibilities with respect to instruction will be clearly defined. For example, every faculty member should be able to answer "yes" to the following questions related to the teaching-learning environment in which he operates:

- Do you insure that each student knows why it is important that he learn the material which comprises the course?
- Do you communicate to the student, in writing, the goals of the course and the specific objectives of each unit of instruction?
- Do you take each student "where he is" and provide learning experiences tailored to his individual needs?
- Do you, through the use of media, incorporate a variety of stimuli in the instructional process?
- Do you stand accountable for student learning?
- Do you teach without doing most of the talking; that is, is the student actively involved in directing his own learning?
- Do you employ testing to assess teaching rather than to categorize students?
- Do you employ nonpunitive grading in your courses?
- If a student performs poorly on a test, is he, after further study, allowed to re-take the test without penalty?
- Do most students learn enough in your courses to earn an "A" or a "B"?
- Do you systematically try to ascertain how your students feel about the class, the subject, and how it is being taught?
- Since it is an accepted fact that students learn at different rates, does your classroom format allow each student to proceed at his own rate?
- Do you have sufficient time to work individually with each student?

3. All administrators should teach at least one course so as to maintain their perspective with regard to the true function of the college—instruction.

4. Students' participation in shaping the instructional program will be encouraged. The students are intimately involved in helping to determine course objectives, in determining the best means for achieving the objectives, and in directing and pacing their own learning as they strive for mastery of the objectives.

5. Expanded curricular offerings with special emphasis on occupational programs (*e.g.*, law enforcement, teacher aide, nursing) are a must for a private junior college wishing to adequately serve the nontraditional students who will become more in evidence on college campuses. Such pro-

grams are also a must for a private college hoping to survive in a locale where public community colleges and technical institutes are within easy commuting distance.

Institutional commitments.

1. The president must assume responsibility for the college's principal function—instruction, and its outcome—student learning. He must focus his attention on providing educational leadership rather than institutional administration. It is the president's job to create an environment in which innovations can flourish, and education can change. Major features of environmental change include innovative approaches to administration and faculty accountability, as well as modifications in traditional relationships between administration, faculty, and students.

2. The entire college community is committed to the concept of accountability. Management by objectives and an ongoing process of institutional research are imperatives if a dynamic instructional program is to be supported and maintained.

3. The college focuses on the dynamic instructional program in fund-raising, student recruiting, and building its image with the community. The goal of "causing student learning" is the nucleus around which the institution revolves.

4. A program of faculty evaluation, employing criteria related to student learning rather than criteria related to instructor characteristics, is appropriate to the innovative instructional program of the college. Faculty are evaluated in terms of student attainment of course objectives and student attitude toward the course and the way it was taught. High attainment and positive attitudes on the part of the students dictate special recognition for the instructor—merit pay and promotion.

5. The number of students being served by an instructor is the only true measure of his work load. One hundred students (or 300 student credit hours) seems to be an acceptable load, both for the instructor and for the students. The traditional yardstick for determining faculty load is inappropriate for a college committed to individualized instruction. Credit hours or contact hours are irrelevant.

6. To encourage innovative instructional projects, funds are provided to assist faculty members in their efforts to improve instruction. A budgetary figure of one percent of the total annual operating costs of the college would seem to be a fair sum with which to work.

7. Students serve on all committees. Where the committee is concerned primarily with student interests (*e.g.*, discipline, student activities), students should have the majority representation.

8. A money-back guarantee to students when the college fails to deliver

on its promises should be considered. In the world of commerce and industry this is considered good business—why not in education?

9. The grading system will be nonpunitive. Mastery of course objectives results in certification (the grade of A, B, or C) by the instructor. Lack of mastery results in allowing the student more time. No grade is awarded until the objectives are mastered. In fact, *no entry* is made on the transcript until the course has been mastered. Credit by examination is a natural concomitant of this type of nonpunitive grading system.

10. The semester will be flexible to the extent that a student, upon completion of a course in October, for example, is able to begin another course at that time. This means too, that a student arriving on campus for the first time in November, March, or May, could begin his college work. Individualized courses permit this calendar flexibility.

11. An open door policy for the college will mean that all students are welcome, regardless of background, prior success in school, or financial capabilities. Financial aid packages will permit economically disadvantaged students to matriculate; individualized instruction will permit educationally disadvantaged students to succeed.

An Overview of Crisis

Economic and educational forces, largely beyond the control of any single institution, are threatening the private junior college with extinction. On the economic side, inflation in the national economy and noncompetitive pricing in public junior colleges have caught the private sector in a relentless squeeze. On the educational side, new philosophies and styles are bypassing tradition-oriented private institutions.

Moreover, present trends in the national economy offer little encouragement. Even if inflation should subside and private colleges find ways to economize on costs, competition in the student market will become even keener as college-age populations begin to level off in the 1980's. At that point, the competitive advantages of the low-tuition, publicly financed community college will comprise an almost hopeless obstacle for the high-priced private junior college.

The economic facts of life, then, present the typical private junior college with only two educational choices for the future: to find sufficient private resources for continuing as a tradition-oriented institution; or to reshape purposes and programs in terms of contemporary junior college trends. The first could lead to eventual oblivion at worst, and academic stagnation at best. The second seems to offer the only genuine hope for the kind of broad-based support needed for survival and viability.

Guidelines for Decision

A general conclusion of the Mitchell College story is that comparatively few private junior colleges can afford to gamble with the future by choosing the first alternative. While the second alternative is also a gamble, the odds are more realistic. Moreover, the second alternative presents a more clearly defined educational choice between what tradition-oriented institutions might wish to do and what they ought to do. Clearly, there is a need for educational leadership at the two-year level of higher education. The innovative private junior college is in a good position to supply it.

Time alone will tell whether individual experiments like Mitchell will succeed, although the evidence to date seems to suggest they will. The real question at the moment is whether trustees, administrators, and faculty in other colleges are willing to commit themselves to similar experiments.

The Immediate Possibilities

The emerging thrust of national policies in junior college education could help to strengthen the role of the private junior college that is committed to change and innovation. There is an existing spectrum of Federal programs which endeavor to promote equal opportunity for students and to assist institutions in this effort. These, and related programs, could become more sharply focused through greater federal-state cooperation in strengthening junior college education on a national scale. There are current policy debates today as to whether or not equal opportunity includes equal access for the disadvantaged as well as freedom of choice (public or

private college) for any student. Finally, it seems clear that federal and state judiciaries are increasingly committed to the constitutional propriety of public support for the secular educational purposes of private colleges.

In order to capitalize on these trends, the private junior colleges must take the initiative, both individually and collectively. Such initiative, however, must be largely oriented to the needs of the public interest, and not merely to the problems of the private sector. All too often private colleges have seemed to say that there is some sort of public obligation to preserve and protect the private sector of higher education simply because it is private.

When institutional trustees, administrators, and faculty state unequivocally their willingness and intention to promote equal opportunity in junior college education, and to be held accountable for that commitment, they will have laid the foundation for positive initiatives of the most imaginative variety. Both the general and specific steps to such commitments can be clearly defined. Chapter II of this monograph summarized the general approach in terms of the concepts of educational opportunity and accountability, and the techniques of individualized instruction. In terms of these concepts and techniques, how the cooperative efforts of trustees, administration, and faculty succeeded in redirecting the purposes and style of one institution were illustrated in Chapter III.

In short, the private junior college which seeks a more viable and effective role for the future should begin by projecting a contemporary thrust and impact through new institutional initiatives at the levels of governance, administration, and teaching. Only the trustees can accept responsibility for overall institutional purposes and, in turn, hold the administration accountable for total institutional performance; only the administration, and in particular the president, can exercise the kind of educational leadership which will generate institutional responsiveness to the several dimensions of educational need that the junior college is designed to serve in contemporary society; and only the faculty can commit the instructional program to learning-oriented teaching styles that effectively serve the diverse student constituencies which populate the junior college today.

Individual institutions also need effective local and national organizations to promote and protect their interests. Many institutions are affiliating with state associations of private colleges and universities that hope to stem the tide against monopolistic tendencies in statewide systems of public higher education. Perhaps more significantly, junior college leaders in the private sector have taken steps to form a National Council of Independent Junior Colleges under the aegis of the American Association of Junior Colleges. The new council's steering committee has "acknowledged its wholehearted interest in providing new directions for the private/independent two-year college, in improving present educational practices,

and in carrying out a national information program to bring about greater awareness and understanding of the institutions and—hopefully—increased support." [25] A cooperative action program has been outlined which essentially defines many of the specific activities which private junior colleges must initiate in such areas as staff orientation, in-service training, community service, and educational reform. Finally, the council has taken the crucially important step of focusing on the critical role of federal legislation in overcoming current deficiencies in junior college education, and on the need for an active role for junior college educators in formulating new programs to close existing gaps.[26] It appears that the leadership of the newly formed council is accentuating the positive, and demonstrating that the private sector in junior college education is more in favor of improving the national structure for higher education than in preserving the *status quo*.

Concluding Academic Postscript

In summary, it is appropriate to emphasize once again what the contemporary junior college movement is all about—student learning. Social and economic realities are reshaping the personal variables of the classroom equation for the 1970's. The private junior college which can determine the solutions to this basic equation will be the institution providing responsive and effective answers to the goals of student learning, and, to the question of its own survival.

In this so-called equation, the two most important variables are obviously the students and the faculty. The fundamental problem is to engender the best possible match between the needs and aspirations of the former, and the talents and interests of the latter.

Concerning the student, a 1970 *New York Times* survey suggests that graduates of certificate and associate degree programs are ". . . in many ways more typical of American youth than is the winner of the baccalaureate degree . . . only 20 percent of American youths today graduate from college with a four-year degree or better." Such statistics provide a measure of current trends, but an underlying qualitative issue is even more important. Some students ". . . are starting to resist the 'college-at-any-cost' viewpoint and are taking a second look at their own capabilities and interests, and at how they fit into today's job market." They reject the notion that "the only good education is an education capped by four years of college."[27]

A number of reasons may account for this shifting emphasis, the most important of which appear to be a ". . . greater willingness on the part of students to follow their own instincts and interests, rather than bow to the strong bias of many teachers, parents and guidance counselors in favor of a [four-year] college education;" and ". . . a resurgence of pride in workmanship among some young people." [28] Related economic reasons include the estimate ". . . that 80 percent of all jobs opening up in the 1970's will

require training beyond the high school but less than a four-year degree." [29] Undoubtedly, the highly visible plight of the currently underemployed—or unemployed—white-collar professional is also a significant factor.

Reinforcing evaluations of this shift may be gleaned from the attitudes of professional educators. From a wholly different perspective, for example, New York University's Allan M. Cartter observes that today's youth, in revolt against the standards of a materialist society, provide ". . . growing evidence of rebellion against the collegiate formal educational process and the standard degree pattern." [30]

Cartter's observations on student values were, in fact, directed toward the need for rethinking faculty manpower standards in higher education. In a similar vein, Robert T. Blackburn ascribes changing faculty life styles to, among other things, ". . . the changing set of values of young people and others. Now truth has a higher value than loyalty, . . . personal expression is more important than social forms . . ." [31]

These forces intersect with still another critical factor in higher education today, the emergence of an oversupply of Ph.D.'s in the college teacher market at the precise moment when most colleges are being forced to invoke rigid economies for their instructional budgets. Already the imbalance between teacher supply and demand has produced traumatic experiences for even the most prestigious graduate schools, not to mention what it has done to the self-esteem of the new Ph.D.

What it may do for the junior college is another matter. In general, Cartter and Blackburn are agreed that it is going to raise the level of available faculty talent. "Weaker institutions can become much stronger in much less time," says Blackburn.[32] "Young, growing institutions will have a better opportunity to develop quality programs and to move into the limelight in the 1970's than they had in the 1960's," Cartter reports.[33] Although it is apparent from the context of their remarks that both are thinking primarily in terms of senior institutions, it is common knowledge that many young teaching-oriented doctorates today are accepting positions in junior colleges and even high schools. Further, as Blackburn observes, given the financial crisis in all kinds of colleges, vacancies ". . . may well go to a potential rather than a proven scholar, that is, to one with a Master's degree . . . Colleges simply can't afford an entire faculty of Ph.D.'s." [34] Should this pattern influence recruiting practices for college teachers generally, the junior college (which does not seek Ph.D. dominated faculties anyway) could substantially increase its status in the teacher market.

In any event, the more important point is that if these largely external forces are reshaping values and styles in college teaching generally, the change is in the direction of those learning-oriented values which junior colleges particularly espouse. Faculty mores in the senior institutions tend

to set the tone for the entire academic profession. In this respect, there has emerged in recent years, a pronounced faculty concern for the nontraditional student:

> Concentrating on activities for which the less privileged are judged unqualified is no longer tolerable. Blacks and others have both the right and the privilege to a B.A. from a respected college or university in the Establishment. Persons who want them will receive them . . . Admitting those whose chances of success are less according to the way the game is currently played simply means that the game as well as the players will be different. It is not a question of higher or lower standards; it is a question of different standards. And different standards mean different faculty values, different allotments of faculty time and attention, different career patterns.[35]

"Different career patterns" may well imply that both economic necessity and growing social commitments will direct at least some of the more talented products of the graduate schools to the junior college. Whether they stay will depend to some extent upon the professional satisfactions they find there. Ordinarily, the typical scholar views the academic climate of a junior college as rather sterile, to say the least. On the other hand, if the junior college of tomorrow becomes a place where underprivileged students learn and teachers are rewarded for the results they produce, this could be more exciting than the standard college and university "publish or perish" route to success.

The inherent possibilities of a new classroom equation, therefore, have important implications for junior college education in the 1970's. They will be especially significant for the innovative private junior college in a decade which may well determine the fate of many private institutions at all levels. In this respect, Cartter aptly reflects what the authors of this monograph believe to be both the major problem for the private junior college, and the key to its solution:

> Many of those responsible for planning the future believe that higher education will follow the same course the high schools followed over the past generation . . . I believe the evidence provided by the young today is counter to this view . . . Dropping out—and intermittently dropping in again—may become a much more common occurrence. Nor do I think that is necessarily an undesirable pattern, for so many students are present in college today under real or imagined duress that the educational process suffers immeasurably.
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> In short, I believe there is a real danger that expansion-minded state planning agencies may overbuild the state systems of higher education by the middle or late 1970's. As we approach that danger point a substantial portion of the private sector will be in a losing battle for survival. Only those private institutions who provide an educational experience believed to be far superior to the public institutions are likely to survive in a world with more places open than there are students.[36]

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